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BALDOCK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
for the year
1957



Baldock U.D.C.
Council Offices,
Baldock,
(Telephone: Baldock 3221).

P U B L I C H E A L T H S T A F F

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (also Divisional M.O. Herts. C.C.).

VICTOR R. WALKER, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.,
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12 Brand Street,
Hitchin.
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PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

RONALD A. D. GATES, M.A.P.H.I.

RODENT OPERATOR.

J. REDHOUSE.

BALDOCK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

By direction of Ministry Circular 1/58 I submit a report on the health of the district for the year 1957.

The vital statistics again give a very favourable local picture. The low death rate of 9.1 again indicates the younger-than-average local age distribution and application of the comparability factor (1.32) supplied by the Registrar General gives a standardised death rate of 12.0.

For 1957 the live birth rate (16.8) exceeds the national rate (16.1). The stillbirth rate approximates to the national figure but for the first year for some time the infant mortality rate is less favourable than the national figure.

Apart from measles, and a mild outbreak of scarlet fever in the first half of the year, there was no serious occurrence of infectious disease.

I would again acknowledge having received during the year every consideration and help from your Council and its Officers.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

V. R. WALKER.

District Medical Officer of Health.

June, 1958.

SECTION A

LOCAL STATISTICS

Area of District	...	...	...	...	...	542 acres.
Population - Registrar General's Estimate for mid-1957	...	...	...	...	...	6,960
Number of separately rated hereditaments at 31st March, 1958	...	...	...	...	...	2,260
Number of separate dwellings (included in above figure) at 31st December, 1957	...	...	...	...	...	1,888
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£65,026
Sum Represented by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	£262.3.3d.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1957

BALDOCK Comparable
URBAN rates for
DISTRICT England & Wales

LIVE BIRTHS

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
(Legitimate	110	66	44
(Illegitimate	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
	<u>117</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>48</u>

Rate per 1,000 of the estimated
resident population 16.8 16.1

STILLBIRTHS

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
(Legitimate	2	2	-
(Illegitimate	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>
(All	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>-</u>

Rate per 1,000 total
(live and still) births 25.0 22.4

DEATHS

<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
63	35	28

Rate per 1,000 of the estimated
resident population 9.1 11.5

DEATH RATE OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE

All infants per 1,000 live births ... 34.2 23.0
Rate for legit. infants per
1,000 legitimate births ... 36.3
Rate for illegit. infants per
1,000 illegitimate births ... Nil.
Actual number of such deaths:-

at all ages
(a) under 4 weeks and (b) under 1 year

Legitimate	4	4
Illegitimate	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>

Deaths from pregnancy, childbirth or abortion 1
Deaths from Cancer (all sites) 14
Deaths from Measles -
Deaths from Whooping Cough -
Deaths from other infective and
parasitic diseases -

Comment on Vital Statistics for the Year

The estimated mid-year population showed a further increase of 60 persons. Live births (117) were 13 more than for 1956 while the figure for deaths (63) was 17 more than that exceptionally low figure for the previous year.

SECTION BGENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

No important change occurred during the year.

SECTION CSANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. Water Supply. All premises in the district are provided with a direct piped supply of water, which is treated and supplied in bulk to the Council's Undertaking by the First Garden City Ltd. The supply has been satisfactory both in quantity and quality and results of chemical analyses and bacteriological examinations of samples have also been satisfactory.
2. Sewerage and Sewage Disposal. No change.
3. Rivers and Streams. No change.
4. Closet Accommodation. No change.
5. Public Cleansing. It has again been difficult to maintain a regular refuse collection due to the constant changing of staff in this service. The occupation of 57 houses on the new Anchor Fields Estate by the end of the year added to the heavy burden already placed on this service.

In February, 1958, the Council decided to purchase an additional freighter in order to improve the inadequate service to the town.

6. Caravan Sites. There are two caravan sites within the area for which consents were granted under the Town & Country Planning Act, 1947. One site is within the curtilage of Kayser Bondor Ltd., adjacent to their sports field and has provision for six trailer type caravans. There is on the site water closet accommodation and washing facilities for the storage and collection of domestic refuse. This site is well maintained and the general circumstances satisfactory from the sanitary point of view.

The second site is situated in Limekiln Lane and is for 30 caravans and here a sanitation block housing waterclosets and washing facilities is to be provided.

7. Rodent Control. Normal rodent control work and treatment was carried out and only minor infestations were found. All the Council's undertakings received regular attention and the soil sewers showed a marked absence of infestation.
8. Sanitary Inspections of the Area (other than Dwellinghouses and food premises).

(a) Number of inspections carried out under the Factories Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
(b) Number of inspections carried out under the Petroleum Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
(c) Number of inspections carried out in connection with drainage and sewerage	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	53
(d) Number of inspections carried out in connection with water supply and sampling	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
(e) Miscellaneous inspections	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
(f) Number of nuisances investigated and dealt with	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
(g) Number of investigations regarding infectious diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24

9. Swimming Bath (Privately owned). During the summer months samples were regularly taken and in all cases the results of bacteriological examinations were satisfactory.
10. Factories and Workplaces. Routine work continued and there is nothing special to report.

SECTION D

HOUSING

Council Housing Schemes

- (a) The last of the eight bungalows for aged persons was completed and tenanted in March.
- (b) 57 of the 105 Gregory traditional type houses on the Anchor Field Estate upon which work commenced in November, 1956, were completed and tenanted by the end of the year.

Slum Clearance

During the year 3 houses were dealt with as unfit for human habitation and incapable of repair at a reasonable expense. No undertaking was received on one house which will be demolished. A scheme to convert the other two houses into one was accepted by the Council.

Rent Act, 1957

The Rent Act which came into force on the 6th July, 1957, enabled local authorities to issue Certificates of Disrepair in respect of controlled houses which were in a state of disrepair and where the landlord had not given an undertaking to remedy the tenant's list of defects to him.

Eight applications for Certificates of Disrepair were received and in due course five Certificates were issued whereas in the other three cases undertakings from the landlord were accepted by the Council.

Improvement Grants

During the year two applications for improvement grant were submitted and approved. A total of 21 grants have been made since the inception of the scheme in 1949.

Inspection of Dwellinghouses during the Year

(1)	Number of dwellinghouses inspected (for housing defects under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	45
	Number of inspections made for that purpose	...	...	...	146
(2)	Number of dwellinghouses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	8
(3)	Number of dwellinghouses (exclusive of those referred to under (2) above) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	23
(4)	Number of dwellinghouses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices under the Public Health or Housing Acts:-				
	(a) By owners	...	...	...	3
	(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	-
(5)	Number of defective dwellinghouses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or its officers	...	...	...	8

SECTION E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

- (1) There were no special Clean Food Campaigns but food shops and food preparing premises were regularly inspected and opportunity taken to give advice on the clean handling of food to the personnel concerned. The Food Hygiene Regulations were brought to the notice of all occupants and in a number of cases informal action taken to bring the premises up to a satisfactory standard.

(2) The type of food premises are as follows:-

Butchers, 4; cafes, restaurants, snack bars, 7; confectioners, 6; dairies 1; fish shops, 3; greengrocers and fruiterers, 4; grocers and provision merchants, 4; bakehouses, 4; canteens, 4

(3) Premises registered under Section 16 of the Food & Drugs Act, 1955, Sale and storage of ice cream, 14 (no ice cream is manufactured in the district); manufacture of meat products, 1.

(4) There are no slaughterhouses in the district.

(5) No food poisoning instances were reported in the year.

(6) The results of all 14 ice cream samples taken were Grade 1.

(7) The specified areas Scheme of 1954 remains in force. Under this, only Designated Milks such as Tuberculin Tested, Pasteurised and Sterilised may be sold in the district.

During the year four firms were issued with supplementary Licences to retail milk in Baldock from premises elsewhere. There is only one dairy and this is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture.

(8) The following foodstuffs were condemned as unfit for human consumption:-

7½ lbs. tinned vegetables.
12 lbs. cooked gammon.
95 lbs. imported canned meat.

SECTION F PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

For the year 1957 totals of acute infectious diseases (after correction) were: Measles, 175, Scarlet fever 27, Whooping Cough 4, Acute Pneumonia 4, Erysipelas 1, and Puerperal pyrexia 1.

Measles had its incidence mainly in the first and second quarters of the year.

Scarlet fever was of quarterly distribution 16, 10, 1, 0, and uniformly mild in type, with its incidence mainly upon infant school and pre-school children.

Pneumonia cases were confined to the last quarter of the year, accompanying the epidemic of Asian influenza.

Whooping cough notifications were most infrequent; there would seem little doubt that the immunisation facilities offered to children under 2 years when accepted by parents usually reduces this illness to at least a mild form, sometimes difficult to label with certainty.

No notification of Anterior Poliomyelitis or of Food Poisoning. were received during the year.

Diphtheria was again absent from the district for a further year. Nevertheless the offer of immunisation for protection against this formerly dreaded disease continues to be accepted by a good proportion of parents.

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Deaths during the year 1957

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 - 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	-(3)	-(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 35	-(1)	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 45	-(1)	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	-	1	-	-(1)	-	-	-	-
55 - 65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 & over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not known								
Totals:	-(5)	3*(4)	-	-(1)	-	-	-	-
Deaths allocated by the Registrar General after final transfers ...					-	-	-	-

Footnote: In addition to the new cases first notified within the district there is shown in brackets additional figures of cases transferred to the local registrar from other areas.

Comment: New local notifications are confined to 3 cases, all females in young adult age groups; for the previous year such figure was 8.

No death from any form of tuberculosis occurred in the district during the year.

V. R. WALKER.

District Medical Officer of Health.

June, 1958.